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A

CENTURY

SERMON,

921

Preached at the FIRST-PARISH,

In Lancaster.

May 28th 1753.

By TIMOTHY HARRINGTON,
Paſtor of the Firſt Church in Lancaſter.

If it had not been the Lord, who was on our ſide, now may Iſrael ſay—If it had not been the Lord who was on our ſide when men roſe up againſt us; then they had ſwallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled againſt us—Bleſſed be the Lord, who hath not given us a prey to their teeth. David.

I will remember the years of the right hand of the Moſt-High—*I will remember the works of the Lord: ſurely I will remember thy wonders of old.* Aſaph.

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To the *First-Parish* in LANCASTER

THE following discourse is Dedicated by theirs in the Gospel. T. HARRINGTON.

A

Century-Sermon.

PSALM cxxix. 1, 2.

Many a time have they afflicted me from my Youth, may Israel *now say:*
Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth; yet they have not prevailed against me.

A *Century* from the *Incorporation* of the *Town this day* expires—And altho' it was long a Frontier, and has often suffered the Fury of the Enemy; is yet fair, and flourishing.

The *Church* of God has been his peculiar care in all ages of the world—And therefore altho' the seed of the Serpent have often persecuted the seed of the Woman; yet they have never been able fully to accomplish their desires—The adversary hath often lifted up the Horn, and they that hate *Mount-Sion* have often bro't her low; yet they have been no more than a scourge in the hand of God, to chastise his people, to correct what was amiss, and to make them more humble and fervent in his service: Yet the enemy meant not so.

The Church in this world is in a militant state, and may well expect shocking assaults from those that hate her.—She hath been troubled on every side, and perplexed,

but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; a bush burning, but not consumed.

It was frequently thus with *Israel*, while they continu'd the peculiar people of God—Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth up, may *Israel* now say, many a time have they afflicted me from my youth; yet they have not prevailed against me.

Interpreters agree that this Psalm was written, when some new and heavy calamity either pressed hard upon, or impended that people.—But whether when *Senacherib*, with the host of *Assyria* invaded *Judea*; or when *Sanballat*, and Confederates, after the return of the captivity, made interest against them in the Court of *Persia*; or at some other calamitous season; is neither easy, nor important to determine.

For whatever was the particular occasion of the writing; the design is manifestly to excite that people to a serious recollection of the numerous calamities bro't upon them by their Enemies; ever since their being taken into covenant with, and made the peculiar people of God—As also to acknowledge the merciful interpositions of God for them; who notwithstanding their frequent rebellions against him, had not suffered their Enemies so far to prevail, as to cut them off from being a People.

Yet they have not prevailed against me, is not to be understood in the strictest sense, as if they had never been overcome, or bro't into subjection by their Enemies—for in this sense it is not true, as appears from the Scripture-History of that Church and People.——

The meaning therefore is, they have never been able wholly to extirpate us, or to cut us off from being a Church and Nation.—

Our Text is well paraphras'd by a learned Prelate.† "Our adversaries," may *Israel* now on this occasion say, "have very often, and very sorely distressed us, ever since we began to be a People; it is hard to tell how "often, or into how great straits they have reduc'd us, "since we began to be a Nation; and yet by the special

† Bp. *Patrick* in loc.

"favour of God, they have never been able to accom-
"plish their desire of our utter Extirpation."

From the Words let us consider,

I. The *Church* and *People* of GOD, as frequently afflicted by their Enemies, and yet preserved from utter ruin: And,

II. As ascribing the Glory of their Preservation unto GOD.

I. Then let us consider the *Church* and *People* of God, as frequently afflicted by their Enemies, and yet preserved from utter ruin.

The History of their affliction and Preservation, from their sojourning in *Egypt*, to the Reign of *Ahasuerus* King of *Persia*, you have on sacred Record, and is therefore unnecessary to be recited here.—

* After the return of the captivity from *Babylon*, the *Jews* were subject to the *Persians* till the destruction of their Empire—and had the privilege of being governed by their own laws, under the Administration of the *Tirshatha*, in conjunction with the High-Priest, and great *Sanhedrim*.

But when the Grecian Empire arose on the Ruins of the Persian, the Jews became subject to Alexander the Great—who being incensed by them, while at the siege of Tyre, immediately after the reduction of it, marched for Jerusalem, with a design of severe revenge.—In this distress, God directed Jaddua, the high priest, in his pontifical robes, with the Priests in their habits, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem in white garments to go forth in procession, to meet him.

This was exactly agreeable to a vision he had seen at *Dio* in Macedonia, encouraging him to march into Asia, and assuring him of the conquest. At the first sight therefore Alexander concluded him to be the priest of that God who conducted his arms; and embracing him with respect, went into the city, and offered sacrifice to the God of Israel, and at his departure granted large favours to them.

* *Vide Stackhouse, on the state of the Jews under the Persians, Grecians and Romans, to the coming of Christ — And Prideaux's Connect.*

After the death of Alexander, his Empire was divided among four of his Captains, the four Horns spoken of in the Prophet Daniel.—And Egypt fell to the share of Ptolemy Soter, who laid siege to Jerusalem; and making a general assault on the sabbath, when the Jews superstitously refused to defend themselves, he carried the City, and captivated an hundred thousand.—But on consideration of their fidelity to former Princes, to whom they had been subjected, he conferred on them many valuable privileges and immunities.

And the Jews continued subject to Egypt about an hundred years—but then a war arising between Ptolemy Epiphanes King of Egypt, and Antiochus the great King of Syria, and Antiochus being victorious in the war, the Jews submitted unto him.

Seleucus Philopater, succeeded Antiochus in the Throne of Syria, who being informed of immense treasures in the Temple of Jerusalem, sent Heliodorus to make the seizure of them; and he forcibly entering the Temple for that purpose, was struck speechless by a Vision, fell to the ground, and was carried off by his Servants, frustrated in his design.

Antiochus Epiphanes, a most cruel Persecutor of the Church and people of God, succeeded Seleucus—He assaulted Jerusalem, and took it, and slew forty thousand, and sold as many into slavery—He also forced himself into the Holy of Holies, he offered a swine on the Altar of Holocaust, defiled the Temple, and plundered both that, and the City.

† And as if this had been but a small thing, he afterwards sent one of his Generals with an Army and express order to destroy all the men remaining in Jerusalem, and to enslave the women and children, who fell on the City on the sabbath, when they were at their devotions, massacred the Men, and captivated the women and children.

After this came forth an Edict, for all nations [but chiefly levelled at the Jews] to forsake their own religion, and conform to that of the King.

And the officer to whom he had committed the exe-

† *Vide* 2 *Maccab.* 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7 *Chapters.*

cution of this unreasonable Decree, coming to Jerusalem, caused the daily sacrifice to cease; suppressed the rights of the Jewish worship, burnt the Law of Moses; consecrated the Temple to *Jupiter Olympius*, set up his Image on the Altar, and compelled the people on pain of death to offer sacrifice to it.

Such as were found assembled for divine worship in the Caves were burnt—And Eleazer, Solomona and her seven Sons, with numerous others, chose rather to submit to the most exquisite torments, than forsake their God.

And to this time it is supposed the Author of the *Epistle* to the *Hebrews* alludes; saying, 'Some were tortured not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain 'a better resurrection—Others had trial of cruel mock-'ings, yea moreover of bonds and imprisonments. They 'were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were burned,* 'were slain with the sword—They wandered about in 'Sheepskins, and Goatskins, in the deserts & mountains, 'dens and caves of the earth, destitute, afflicted, tormented.

But altho' God at this time severely rebuked his People, yet He did not utterly forsake them; but excited Mattathias, and his valiant sons, to stand up in the cause of Israel; who raising armies, not only made a gallant stand, but obtained many signal victories over their oppressors.—And three years and a half after the pollution of the Temple, they purify'd it, and afresh dedicated it to the Lord; which was the original of the Feast *of Dedication* spoken of in the New-Testament.

The Maccabean Family are said to have held the Government of Judea for above an hundred years; and some part of the time as Sovereign Princes, until a difference arising between Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, two Princes of that Blood; they refer'd it to Pompey the Great, a Roman General, then in *Cælosyria*—But he refusing fully to hear the matter before his arrival in Jerusalem; Aristobulus distrusting his cause, fled and shut up himself in the fortress of Alexandrion; but on the approach of Pompey,

* *See Whitby on the place.*

surrendered himself.—However, his party at Jerusalem seized the Mount of the Temple, and made preparation for a vigorous defence—On which Pompey marched his whole army to Jerusalem, besieged and took the place, and put twelve thousand to the sword.

After this, Rufus another Roman General, plundered the Temple.—And,

After this, Herod the great, the Son of Antipas, a noble Idumean, obtained the Kingdom of Judea, by a full vote of the Roman Senate.—In his time OUR BLESSED LORD was born and the infants murdered at Bethlehem.

But notwithstanding the afflictions of Israel, from the infancy of their nation, they continued the Church and peculiar people of God, until the appearance of the MESSIAS, to take down the wall of partition between *Jew and Gentile*, and until the Constitution they were under had stood its appointed time—And until by the greatest of all crimes, the Crucifixion of their MESSIAS, they had provoked God to deliver them to the power of their enemies.——

And the preservation of the Christian Church under her affliction and Adversity, hath been as remarkable as the preservation of the Jewish.

For altho' the people of the Jews combined against it; and altho' the Heathen rag'd, the Kings of the Earth set themselves, and the Rulers took Counsel together to overthrow it; yet their counsels were turned into foolishness, and they unable to accomplish their desire.—The methods they pursued were had in derision by the King of Zion, and overruled to the quicker spread, and establishment of the truth.

The holy lives of the primitive christians; the constancy and intrepidity of the martyrs in prisons, Flames, and Death, under the ten prosecutions of *Rome Heathen*, were more effectual to the promotion of christianity, than all the stratagem, and fury of the enemy to its supression.—For this reason the blood of the Martyrs is called the seed of the church.—And thus christianity triumphed over all its adversaries, until Constantine the great was fully seated on the imperial throne,—when it became the established religion of the Roman Empire—And for some

time the church was in prosperity and peace.

However,

Before the death of Constantine, the Arian Heresy appeared: and at last the asserters of it became so numerous, powerful and malevolent, as to persecute those who adhered to the Apostolic faith.

After this, came the Roman Apostacy, and Papal Tyranny; errors and superstition overwhelmed the whole western church——To which may be added,

The Mahometan Imposture in the Eastern; and the oppressing the churches of Asia, by the Saracen Power; under which they groan to this day.

But to return; altho' the western church suffered under Papal oppressions; yet even in the thickest darkness, there was a remnant, who did not bow the knee to Baal; the Vaudois, and Waldenses inhabiting the vallies of Piedmont. And,

Besides these, almost in every age God raised up witnesses to the truth, until the sixteenth century; when Luther, and a number of pious reformers arose in Germany, boldly contending for the truth, against the errors and usurpations of Rome.

And divers Princes of Germany embracing the reformed religion, boldly in a diet of the Empire, protested against a decree which was made against it; whereby they acquired the glorious name of Protestants.

From Germany, the reformation spread into England; way being made for it, by the renouncing of the Popes supremacy, and by other transactions in the reign of King Henry the VIII.

And therefore on the accession of Edward the VI. to the Crown, Arch Bp. Cranmer, Bp. Latimer, Bp. Ridley, and other excellent persons, under the approbation and patronage of that pious Prince, carried it on to a very considerable length.

When God thus turned again the captivity of Sion, they were like those that dream; then their mouth was filled with laughter, and they said among their Enemies, The Lord had done great things for them, whereof they were glad.

However these pious reformers, by reason of the temper and circumstances of the times, and the premature

death of that good Prince, could not carry on the reformation so far as they earnestly desired.

And on the accession of the Princess Mary, a black and heavy cloud overspread the noble design; the Roman superstition was restored, and the professors of the reformed religion were persecuted to the Stake and Death.

But on the accession of the Princess Elizabeth, the reformed religion was re-established. However, neither that illustrious Princess, nor King James the I. her successor, nor their clergy, would suffer the reformation to be carried on further, than it had been in the reign of King Edward.

Moreover, in the reign of Q. Elizabeth, an act of Parliament was passed requiring *Uniformity* in Worship under very severe Penalties;—continued by K. James I. and more severely urged by K. Charles I.

Our Fathers therefore, earnestly desiring a greater reformation, and liberty to worship God according to their consciences, chose rather to expose themselves to almost any hardships, than violate them.

And having obtained liberty of King James the I. to remove, and set down within certain limits in America, with liberty of worshipping God according to that way which appeared to them most agreeable to Scripture.

They left their native Country and crossed the Atlantic, with their families, into this then howling wilderness—founding the colony of Plymouth in 1620.—— And the colony of the Massachusetts in the year 1630.

And after their arrival, for the trial of their faith and patience, God exercised them with grevious and mortal sicknesses, with scarcity & famine—Yet they soon spread abroad; and before the year 1636, had founded the colony of Connecticut, and had planted in other parts.

‖ But in the year 1636, the Pequots, the most fierce and warlike of all the Indian tribes in that part of the country, and formidable to all their neighbours; having committed many barbarous outrages on the Narragansetts, to the eastward, and on the Mohicags to the northward of them; on the English & Dutch, as they occasionally came among them, and on the Planters on Connecticut river—The colonies unanimously raised their forces, and cut off

‖ See Hubbard's Narrative, Page 5.

seven hundred; and part of those that escaped the English sword, fled to the Mohawks, and were destroyed by them; and the other were by the English subjected to, and incorporated with the Narragansetts and Moheags.

After this, there was a general peace and prosperity for a considerable term.

Thus much in general: we now proceed to a particular consideration of the affairs of this Town.

In the year 1645, Sholan, alias Shaumauw, Proprietor of Nashawogg, and Sachem of the Nashawas, who lived at Waushacum, informed Mr. Thomas King of Watertown (with whom he traded, and for whom he had a considerable friendship) of the said tract of land as well accommodated for a Plantation, desiring that the English would come and set down by him.

Accordingly Mr. King, Mr. John Prescot, and others,* procured of said Sholan, a Deed of said Nashawogg, ten miles in length, and eight in breadth; with these restrictions, that the English should not molest the Indians in their hunting, fishing, or usual planting places.—And the General Court confirmed the Deed.

On this, the Associates purchased of Mr. King all his Interest in the Premises; and entered into mutual obligation by a certain term to appear on the spot, to begin and carry on the Plantation, and contracted with a Preacher to go on with them.

Having thus concerted affairs, they sent up divers persons,† (to whom they had given Lots) to perform divers things, at the common expense of the Proprietors, before the time of their general appearance; and these were the first inhabitants.

But before the time for their general appearance; their Minister, to whom they had committed their mutual obligation, (whether by reason of his own aversion to the place, or by the instigation of such of the Proprietors as were unwilling to come up themselves, is uncertain) forsook them, carrying with him said mutual obligation. And in consequence of this all the associates, except Mr. Prescot, refused to fulfil their contract, but yet held their Interest. So that for the space of seven years, very little

*Hamen Garrett, Thomas Skidmore, Mr. Day, Mr. Symonds, &c.
†Richard Linton, Lawrence Waters, and John Ball.

was done to forward the plantation.—But at length some of the rest being willing to engage more heartily in the affair; on the eighteenth of May, 1653, there being *Nine Families* in the place, they petitioned the General Court for an Incorporation, and obtained it by the name of LANCASTER.

From the year 1654, Mr. Rowlandson preached among them, until the 14th of April 1658; at which time they invited him to settle in the Work of the Ministry among them; and he accepted their Invitation, and probably was ordained the same year.

The town was in Peace and Prosperity for the space of twenty two years from its Incorporation.—And the Indians were very serviceable to the inhabitants, by supplying them with such Corn and wild meat as they stood in need of; and that on very moderate terms.

But on the twenty-fourth of June 1675, Philip, Sachem of Pocanoket, commonly called King Philip, rebelled against the English, and began a very bloody and destructive War.

And on the 22d of August following, eight persons, in different parts of the town were killed.*

And as the Sachems of the Narragansett country joined with Philip in his Rebellion; so after the destruction of Canonicus'-Fort, commonly called the Narragansett-Fort, by the forces of the united colonies, on the 19th of December 1675—The Indians leaving that part of the country, moved toward Wachusett, and, meeting with the Nipnets, and Nashawas, in their march, persuaded them to take up arms against the English; and after this combination, part turned back towards Plymouth Colony, burning and destroying as they went along.‖

But Philip, with the rest, confessed by themselves after the peace to be 1500 marched for Lancaster, in which there were then above fifty families—And on the 10th of February 1676, assaulted in five distinct bodies & places, burning most of the unfortified houses, and killing several persons.†

* Mr. George Bennett, William Flagg, Jacob Farrar, Joseph Wheeler, Mordecai Mc Load, and his wife, and two children.

‖ See Hubbard, Page 60.

† Mr. Jonas Fairbank, Joshua Fairbank. Richard Wheeler, at Wheeler's Garrison.—Ephraim Sawyer at Prescott's Garrison. And in other places Henry Farrar—And—Ball & Wife.

However, they destroyed no Garrison, but that belonging to the Rev. Mr. Rowlandson; in which, there were soldiers and inhabitants to the number of forty-two. And As there was no fortification on the back of the house, and the English being unable to ply their shot on that side; the enemy having loaded a Cart with combustible matter, pushed it flaming to the house; and thus being reduced to the sad necessity of either perishing in the flames, or resigning themselves to the Savages, they surrendered.

On this, the Men, except one who made his escape,* were slain,§ or reserved for torture.—And about twenty of the Women and Children were carried into Captivity; among which, was the Consort of the Rev. Mr. Rowlandson; an account of whose Captivity, Sufferings and Return, written by her own hand, you have doubtless many of you seen in Print.

Mr. Rowlandson was then at Boston, soliciting the Governor and Council for more soldiers for the protection of the place—And on his return, met the heavy news, which he received with a becoming submission and magnanimity.

‖ One of the Women taken at this time being unable to travel by reason of her Pregnancy, and being also very discontented, the Indians made a large fire, formed a ring about her, and first knocked her on the head, stript her naked, and cast her into it. ——But

The women and children in general, suffered no other evils among the enemy than what were unavoidable from a state of captivity, and the wants the Indians themselves were in—And most of them were returned.

Capt. Wadsworth hearing of the assault of the town at Marlborough, where he then was, with forty brave men, marched immediately to its relief—And as there was then a very considerable flood, and the river of consequence every where unpassable but at the Bridge; the Indians had taken from thence the planks to prevent the

* Ephraim Roper.

§ Enfign Divol, Abraham Joflin, Daniel Gains, Thomas Rowlandfon, William & Joſeph Kerley, John Mc Load, John Kettle, and two Sons, Joſiah Divol, &c.

N. B. Capt. Kerley's Wife, and Ephraim Roper's Wife, were alſo killed in attempting to eſcape. ‖ Abraham Joſlins wife.

passing of Horsemen—And ambushed to prevent the passing of Footmen; but had left their ambushment before the arrival of Capt. Wadsworth, who therefore passed it unmolested, and entered the town undiscovered, and forced the enemy for the present to quit it.—He quartered his men in various parts of the town, and tarried some days; but before his departure, lost one of his men * by the Indians.

This is that famous Capt. Wadsworth, who afterwards with Capt. Brocklebank, and the much greater part of their men, gloriously fell in the cause of their country in a fight with the enemy at Sudbury. But to return—

About six weeks after the assault of the town, it being judged untenable under the then present circumstances, both of that and the country; the remainder of the inhabitants, except one † who was killed that very day by the enemy, drew off under a guard of Horse and Foot.—And immediately on this desertion of the place, every building that remained, save two, were reduced to ashes.

And in this state of Desolation the town continued for about four years.‡

During this dispersion of the Lancaster people, the Rev. Mr. Rowlandson, was invited to preach at Weathersfield in the colony of connecticut, and died before the re-settlement of the town.

After the re-settlement, divers gentlemen for the space of seven years supplied the pulpit. ‖

In Feb. 1688, Mr. John whiting was invited to preach on Probation; and continued preaching until Nov. 1690, when he was invited to settle in the Work of the Minist-

* George Harrington at Prescott's Mill.

† John Roper.

‡ It may be proper to observe here, That Sholan, who conveyed this tract of land to the English, always behaved in a peaceable and friendly manner towards them. That Matthew, who was his nephew, and succeeded him as Sachem of the tribe, was always in good terms with the English.—But that Sagamore Sam, who was nephew to Matthew, and succeeded him, was of a different temper, and character; and joining with Philip in his rebellion, was taken by the English, and executed as a Rebel. Those of the tribe who survived the war, divided; one part moving to Albany, and the other to Penicook, with which tribe they incorporated.

‖ Mr. Carter, Mr. Wooddroffe, and Mr. Oakes.

ry; and he accepting the invitation, was probably soon after ordained.

In 1688, William, Prince of Orange, arrived in England, and King James the Second abdicated the Throne; whose cause the French King espousing, involved the Nation in a war with France, and New-England in a war with the Canadians, French and Indians—In the calamities of which this town had a large share.

For on the 18th of July, 1692, the Indians assaulted the house of Mr. Peter Joslin, * who was at his labour in the field—and knew nothing of it till entering the house, found his wife and three children, and a woman ‡ that lived in his family, barbarously butchered by their hatchets, and weltering in their gore.

His wife's sister, § with another of his children were carried into captivity—She returned: but that child was murdered in the wilderness—Thus was he stript naked, and called to bitter weeping and lamentation.

In 1695, on a Lord's Day Morning, Mr. Abraham Wheeler, going from Garrison to his own house, on some occasion, was there shot by an enemy, that had lain in ambush for him; but altho' mortally wounded, he rested the gun from him, and bro't it towards the Garrison, until met by his friends.

In 1697, a considerable body of the enemy, under five commanders, but one in chief, came and lurked in the woods for some time, sending in their scouts by night to observe the posture of the town.—And having done this, they determined to begin the attack on Mr. Thomas Sawyers Garrison; and the firing at that was to be a signal to all the rest, to fall on in their respective stations.

And accordingly on the eleventh of September, when the inhabitants, suspicious of no enemy, were gone out to their labour; they came in several companies into the town, and were very near surprizing said Sawyer's Garrison, both the gates being left open; but that Mr. Jabez Fairbank, who was at his own house half a mile's distance, and designing to bring his little son from said Garrison, mounted his horse which came running to him in a fright; and rode full speed into the gate, but yet noth-

* He still survives in the 88th year of his age.
‡ The Widow Whitcomb. § Elizabeth How.

ing suspicious of an enemy—However, this was a means of saving the Garrison: for the enemy who were just ready to rush into it, supposing they were discovered, gave over that design; and fired at such as were out in the fields.

At that time, the Rev. Mr. John Whiting being on some occasion at a distance from his Garrison, they surprised and killed him.—They indeed offered him quarter; but he chose rather to fight to the last, than resign himself to those whose tender mercies are cruelty.—

At the same time they killed twenty others; wounded two but not mortally; and captivated six, five of whom returned.‖

On this sorrowful occasion, the town set a-part a day for Prayer and Fasting.

From 1697 to 1700, several gentlemen supplied the Pulpit.†

In May 1701, Mr. Andrew Gardner was invited to preach and in September following was invited to settle in the Ministry.

In 1704 there came an army of seven hundred French and Indians from Canada—with two Tribes, under the command of Monsi. Boocore, designed for Northampton. —But a deserter came and gave notice of their numbers and approach.—And those western frontiers were seasonably strengthened.

Moreover, in their march there arose a mutiny among them about the division of the plunder; and the contention rose so high, that above two hundred of them returned—But the rest came on, and sent out their scouts, who reported, that the English were ready in great numbers to receive them. —On this they called a Council of War, in

‖ Killed. Rev. Mr. Whiting, Daniel Hudson and his Wife and two Daughters, Ephraim Roper and Wife and Daughter, John Skait and Wife, Joseph Rugg and wife and three Children, the widow Rugg, Jonathan Fairbank and two children, and two Children of Nathaniel Hudson.

Captivated, Jonathan Fairbank's Wife, the widow Wheeler, Ephraim Roper's Son, John Skait's Son, Joseph Rugg's Son, and Mary Clafier.

† Mr. Robinson, Mr. Jones, and Mr. Whitman. Mr. Jones was invited to settle, but difficulties arising, his Ordination was prevented, and he removed.

which they concluded to lay aside the design on Northampton—and to beat up for Volunteers, for the assault of Lancaster; and a large number enlisted. *

And on the 30th of July they came within about two miles of the Town—and encamped, and by night sent in their spies to observe the Posture of the English.—And on the 31st they fell furiously upon the town early in the morning: and in their first onset killed Lieut. Nathaniel Wilder, near the gate of his own Garrison.—And the same day three others near the same Garrison. †

The enemy were uncommonly brave: and therefore altho' Capt. Tyng, who had the command of the Garrison soldiers; and Capt. How, who on the alarm, marched immediately from Marlborough with what men he could suddenly raise; and the inhabitants maintained a warm dispute with them for some time; yet being much inferior in number were obliged to retreat into Garrison.—On which they burnt the Meeting-House, and six other buildings, & destroyed much of the live stock of the town.

Note. What numbers of the enemy were killed, either in the field, or at the other Garrison is uncertain, but is thought to be considerable—among the rest a French officer of some distinction, was mortally wounded, which greatly exasperated their spirits.

Before night there came such numbers to the relief of the town, that the enemy retreated; and although pursued, yet were not overtaken. Had they like those in 1697 tarried till the inhabitants were dispersed to their labour, they might in all human probability, have done much greater mischief, if they had not entirely destroyed the town.—But God had mercy on his people.

On the 26th of October following, there having been a party of the enemy discovered at Still-River, the soldiers and inhabitants belonging to the Rev. Mr. Gardner's Garrison, with divers others, went in quest of them; who returning in the evening fatigued with the service of the day—Mr. Gardner, in compassion took the Watch that

* Some of the accounts which Mr. Penhallow hath given of the mischiefs done in this town by the enemy, are in divers cases not only imperfect, but very erroneous, which are doubtless owing to the wrong information he had.

† Abraham How, John Spaulding, and Benjamin Hutchins.

night upon himself; and coming out of the Box late at night, on some occasion, was heard by one between sleeping and waking in the house, who supposing him an enemy, seized the first gun which came to hand, and shot him through the body in the Parade.‖

But the fatal mistake immediately appeared; and he being carried into the house, forgave the person that shot him; and in an hour or two expired, to the great grief not only of his consort, but of his people, who had an exceeding value for him.†

In May 1705, Mr. John Prentice was preaching among them, and continued preaching, until Feb. 1707, when he was invited to settle in the Work of the Ministry, and accepted the invitation.

On the 15th of October 1705, Mr. Thomas Sawyer, with his son, ‡ and another was captivated.

On the 16th of July 1707, Mr. Jonathan White was killed by the Indians

And on the 18th of August following, twenty-four stout Indians, who according to their own account had all been Captains, came to Marlborough, and captivated Mr. Jonathan Wilder, a native of this town, and but lately removed from it.—The next day being pursued by about thirty of Marlborough and Lancaster; and overtaken—the front of our men came upon them before they had the least apprehension of a pursuit.

Their packs were all slung, and it being a misty day, their cases were on their guns.—And therefore had ours all run down upon them, they might easily have destroyed or taken all, and saved the life of the captive.—The enemy themselves at the first appearance of our men, had determined to resign themselves to their mercy.—But observing that but ten of the thirty came down upon them, they took courage, unslung their packs, and fought like men—having first dispatched their captive.

In this action, the enemy lost nine, and all their packs; and on our part two,* were killed, and two§ wounded,

‖ Mr Samuel Prefcot.
† Mr. Gardner was not ordained.
‡ Elias Sawyer and John Biglo.
* Mr. John Farrar, and————Singletery.
§ Mr. Ephraim Wilder, and Mr. Samuel Stevens.

but not mortally.

It ought to be observed, again, that but ten of our men were in the action.

On the 29 of March 1708, the Rev. Mr. John Prentice was ordained.

On August 5, 1710, a party of the enemy coming by the advantage of the bushes, very near to Mr Nathaniel, and Mr. Oliver Wilder, and an Indian servant, at labour in the field, fired upon them. The servant was killed but they escaped to the Garrison.—And this is the last mischief that hath been done by them in this town.

The Records of the church in Mr. Rowlandson's time, were in all probability consumed in his Garrison.—And the Records in Mr. Whiting's day not being to be found, we have no account of the number of Communicants, or of Baptisms, from the founding of this church to the ordination of the Rev. Mr. Prentice in 1708.

But during Mr. Prentice's Ministry, 331 were received to full communion, and 1593 baptized.

After a life of much service, faithfulness, and loved, on the 6th of January 1747,8, the Rev. Mr. Prentice deceased, greatly lamented.

From the last recorded by him, to the re-settlement of the Ministry on Nov. 16, 1748, were 38 baptisms.

And from the re-settlemet to this day, 70 Persons have been admitted to full communion, and 183 baptized.

So that from March 1708, to this day, 491 have been admitted to full communion, and 1814 baptized.

Of the Members in this church was formed a considerable part of the Church in Harvard in 1733.

The church in Bolton, in 1741.

In part, the church in Leominster, 1743.

The church in the second precinct, in 1744.

With Propriety therefore this Church may say; Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, many a time have they afflicted me from my youth; yet they have not prevailed against me.

Proceed we now to a brief consideration of the

II. Thing, viz. The Church and People of GOD ascribing unto HIM the Glory of their Preservation.——

Yet they have not prevailed against me, is designed not only to assert their Preservation from utter Ruin, but also

to ascribe the glory of it unto God—Unto God, who in consequence of their peculiar relation to Him, and of his gracious promises to Them, had gloriously appeared for them in Egypt, and at the Red-Sea; and often afterwards, when endangered or oppressed by enemies, more numerous and powerful than themselves.

These Ascriptions are common in the sacred pages.—'We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have 'told us what work thou didst in their days, in the times 'of old ‖—'If it had not been the Lord who was on our 'side, now may Israel say—If it had not been the Lord, 'who was on our side, when men rose up against us; 'then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath 'was kindled against us—Then the waters had overwhelmed us; then the proud waters had gone over our 'soul—Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us a prey 'to their teeth—Our help is in the name of the Lord.†

These acknowledgements and ascriptions are not only founded on the reason and nature of things; but also enjoined by divine authority, to keep divine benefits in memory, to inspire succeeding generations with gratitude and to engage them effectually in the fear and service of the most high God—Accordingly we have the church of Israel assigning this as a reason of her practice.

'We will shew to the generation to come the praises 'of the Lord, and his strength and his wonderful works 'that he hath done—For he established a testimony in 'Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known 'to their children—That the generation to come might 'know them, even the children which should be born; 'who should arise and declare them to their children—'That they might set their hope in God, and not forget 'the works of God, but keep his commands, and be stedfast with him. §

The deliverance of Israel from oppression and bondage in Egypt, was to be celebrated with solemn festivity, & with the reason of it carefully to be transmitted by divine appointment to posterity—'And thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me, when I came out of Egypt,—And

‖ Pſal. 44. 1. † Pſal. 124—145, 11——14. incluſ. Iſai. 63, 7,8.
§ Pſalm. 78. 4—7. incluſ.

it shall be for a sign unto thee, that the Lord's Law may be in thy mouth; thou therefore shalt keep this ordinance.*

And when Haman, who was of the blood royal of Amaleck, and therefore the natural enemy of Israel, plotted their destruction through the whole Persian Empire, and had procured of Ahasuerus a decree for that purpose; God by a very signal interposition cast him into the pit which he had digged, and bro't his devises upon his own head, but gave joy and gladness and a good day unto the Jews.—Wherefore Mordecai (no doubt by divine direction) appointed this Preservation to be celebrated annually with festivity and joy on the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month Adar.—This was celebrated with thanksgiving and praise to God.†

And as the commemoration of God's appearing to the relief of his people under their distresses is of divine appointment; we accordingly find them ascribing the glory to Him.—Thus after the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red-Sea, Moses and the people of Israel give God the praise—'The Lord hath triumphed gloriously: 'the horse and his rider he hath thrown into the sea.—'The Lord is my strength and my salvation—Thy right 'hand, O Lord, is glorious in power—and hath dashed 'in pieces the enemy.'‡

When Deborah and Barak delivered Israel from the oppression of Jabin King of Hazor, they in their triumphal song give all the glory unto God.—'Praise ye the Lord 'for the avenging of Israel—Lord, when thou wentest 'out of Seir, when thou marchedst out of the field of Edom: 'the earth trembled, and the Heavens dropped; the 'mountains melted before the Lord God of Israel—They 'fought from Heaven, the Stars in their courses fought against Sisera, and the River Kisbon swept them away.‖

And when the Lord with thunder and lightning discomfitted the Philistines before his people, who pursued them to the confines of their own country; Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it *Ebenezer*, saying, Hitherto the Lord hath helped us. §

* Exod. 13. 8,9,10. † Esth. 9,20, &c. ‡ Exod. 15.
‖ Judges 5, § 1 Sam. 7. 12.

And what shall I more say? For the time would fail me to tell of David and of Asa, and of Jehosaphat, and of Hezekias, and of other worthies; who with the prophets and people of God, gave Him the glory of their preservation under affliction and in distress from enemies.

And as the reason of these ascriptions hath always been the same, and the same spirit of gratitude hath rested upon the saints of all succeeding ages; so the christian church hath always given to the same God the glory of her preservation, under the numerous evils which have been bro't upon her by her enemies—whether men or devils.

And well may the inhabitants of this country join with the church in all preceeding times, in giving glory to the God of salvation.

For when they were few in number, when they were far from human help, in a howling wilderness, and surrounded with numerous Barbarians who thirsted for their blood, and often plotted their destruction; God the God of Israel was their saviour—They trusted in him, and were not ashamed—And notwithstanding all the attempts of their enemies, whether American or European, are yet a growing people.

The habitations of cruelty are become a valley of vision—Where Satan was worshipped with horrid rites, the God of Heaven is now adored—The solitary places rejoice, the wilderness blossometh as the rose, and the glory of Sharon is given unto it.

Surely, it was God that bro't a vine from far, cast out the heathen before it, planted it, and caused it to take root, and fill the land; so that the hills are covered with the shadow, and the bows thereof are like the goodly cedars.

God grant, that the hedges may not be broken down, that it may never be plucked by those that pass by, that the Boar out of the wilderness may never waste it, nor the wild beasts devour it; but may the glory of the Lord be upon it from Generation to Generation.

But the present Assembly calls for a particular address.

Brethren, as through the good hand of our God upon us, we this day see the completion of a Century from the incorporation of the Town, and have recollected some

of the signal mercies of God to our fathers under their numerous afflictions by the enemy; we may with Propriety join with Israel of old, and say,

'If it had not been the Lord who was on our side; if 'it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when 'men rose up against us; then they had swallowed us 'up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us.— 'Blessed be the Lord who hath not given us a prey to 'their teeth—Our help is in the name of the Lord— Who reigns in Zion head over all things unto his church —And will reign, till all opposing rule, authority and power shall be put down, and the time come for delivering the kingdom of God, even the father, and for presenting his church without spot, and with exceeding joy before the presence of his glory.

As the church was purchased by his own blood, the Father hath in all ages committed the preservation of it to Him: and as Mediator vested him with all power in heaven and earth. In all the afflictions of his people, he was afflicted, in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. He was the refuge of our fathers in their distresses. Let us therefore mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that he hath bestowed upon us—And the great goodness towards the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed according to his mercy, and according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses.

Let the consideration of these things animate us.

1.) To a firm and unshaken confidence in Him under all adversity.

This is one important end for which the merciful appearance of God for our fathers in their distresses are to be recollected. He commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children, that they might set their hope in God.

2.) Let these things excite us to a sincere compliance with all his precepts, whether relating to faith or practice.

This also is another important use to be made of them. That they might set their hope in God, and not forget his works, but keep his commandments.

And without a sincere regard to divine precepts, our

confidence will be presumption. For there is no promise of protection or blessing to such as persevere in disobedience and unbelief.

If ye forget the works of the Lord, and walk not in his ways, ye may well expect to be abandoned to all evil. This is evident from the history of Israel—For when Joshua and all that generation were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation, who knew not the works of the Lord, which he had done in Israel; They forsook the Lord God of their fathers, and followed after the Gods of the People that were round about them, and provoked the Lord to anger—And he delivered them into the hands of Spoilers, that spoiled them, and sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not stand any longer before their enemies.

Whethersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil; as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn unto them, and they were greatly distressed.

Muse therefore on his wonders of old, and on his works in the days of your fathers, until the fire shall burn within you—until sacred ardors shall rise in your souls, and animate you to the most cheerful trust and obedience.

Ye are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and the children of the covenant which he made with them—Fulfil therefore the obligations, as ye expect the blessings of that Covenant.—Let your hearts be stedfast in it.

Be ambitious of imitating whatever was excellent in your ancestors—Consider from whence ye are fallen—Your works are not perfect before God: Remember therefore how ye have received and heard, & repent—and strengthen the things that remain and are ready to die.

Is not this the voice of your fathers, 'And ye our 'children, know ye the God of your fathers, and serve 'him with perfect hearts and willing minds; if ye seek 'him he will be found of you, but if you forsake him he 'will cast you off forever.'

Your fathers bare the heat and burden of the day, they submitted to many hardships and dangers; not only that they might leave unto you a fair temporal inheritance, as it is this day; but also, what they esteemed infinitely preferable, that they might leave you in the enjoyment of

of the Gospel in its purity—For the sake of this they ventured their lives in this wilderness—For this, they exposed themselves to perils by sea, to perils in the wilderness, to perils by the heathen, and to various evils.

And ye are risen up in your fathers stead; and prosperity shines in full orb upon you—Stand fast therefore in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free.

Give commandment to your household, and to your seed after you, to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless, and to do mercy and judgment—That they also may give the same in charge to theirs—from generation to generation——

That the divine blessing may be upon them, and the Kingdom of God be advanced by them.

AMEN.

APPENDIX.

THE following narrative is added, to ſatisfy the curioſity of ſuch as feel a particular concern in the hiſtory of Lancaſter, and to perpetuate facts, which may be intereſting to future generations.

In the more advanced ſtages of their ancient ſettlement it has ſeen good days according to the days in which in its infancy it was afflicted. It has not ſuſtained the common interruption of union or proſperity. Few churches in New-England have been favoured by Providence with ſo long enjoyment of their paſtors. With only an intermiſſion of about ten months; the miniſtry of Rev. Mr. PRENTICE, and Rev. Mr. HARRINGTON filled up a period of more than eighty years. Some of the aged ſtill living agree with thoſe who have retired from the ſcene in teſtifying to the fidelity, zeal, and profeſſional eminence of Rev. Mr. Prentice.

The Rev. Mr. Harrington has ever been venerated as a model of miniſterial excellence. With a good portion of ſcientific and theological attainments he united ſingular pertinency and fervour in the performance of devotional exerciſes. He was alſo a pattern of chriſtian cheerfulneſs and affability, of ſympathy with the ſick, and afflicted, and of compaſſion to the poor. The tribute of reſpect and affection ſtill heartily rendered by ſurvivors to his memory is a ſolid proof of his preeminent virtues.

After being unable from the infirmities of age for nearly four years to perform the duties of the miniſtry, he died Dec. 18, 1795.

During his miniſtry, 478 were admitted to the communion of the Church, and to 1531 the ordinance of baptiſm was adminiſtered.

It ſhould be recorded in honour of the people, whom he ſerved, that with unanimity and forwardneſs they paid his ſalary in full to the day of his death, and generouſly defrayed the expence of the funeral.

On the 9th of October 1793, the Rev. Nathaniel Thayer was ordained colleague Paſtor with the Rev. Timothy Harrington.

Since that time 166 perſons have made a publick profeſſion of religion and been received to the enjoyment of chriſtian ordinances; 413 have been baptized.

The union and flouriſhing ſtate of the Town form a ground of hope, that the preſent generation will prove worthy of the privileges and bleſſings ſecured for them by a race of virtuous and pious anceſtors.

JULY 10, 1806.

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